

RECOGNITION OF EDGAR JACOME GUZMAN SELECTION AS A DELEGATE TO THE CONGRESS OF FUTURE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY LEADERS

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Edgar Jacome Guzman, a student in San Ysidro, California, for his selection to represent the State of California as a Delegate at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders. The event will be held at the Tsongas Center at University of Massachusetts Lowell in Lowell, MA, from June 29, 2017 to July 1, 2017.

The Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders is an honors-only program designed to motivate and direct the top students in our country who aspire to be scientists, engineers, and technologists and encourage them to stay true to their dream. All delegates are nominated by their teachers or the National Academy of Future Scientists based on proven academic excellence and a demonstrated desire to enter the scientific or technology professions.

I want to congratulate Edgar Jacome Guzman in his success and leadership in the scientific field.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIER ARMY STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) NICHOLAS J. OLIVIER

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Nicholas J. Olivier who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on February 23, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom III. SSG Olivier's final mission was to conduct a foot patrol in Baghdad, Iraq in order to find terrorist elements reported to be operating in the area. While on the patrol, enemy forces initiated a complex ambush with an improvised explosive device and small arms fire that resulted in the mortal wounding of SSG Olivier and the injury of several of his fellow soldiers.

SSG Olivier was described as a leader who made it a top priority to get the men under his command back home to their families and loved ones once their tour was complete.

SSG Olivier, of Jackson, MS, was assigned to B Company, 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, V Corps, Pineville, LA. He was the 15th member of the 256th from Louisiana to lose his life in Iraq.

SSG Olivier is survived by his parents, William and Linda Olivier and his wife, Angelle. In a statement issued by the National Guard, Angelle Olivier said her husband was committed to Operation Iraqi Freedom III and his country because he felt it was necessary to ensure America's freedom and to fight to abolish terrorism.

SSG Olivier gave his life to protect the freedoms we all enjoy. His sacrifice will not be forgotten.

THE EVOLVING THREAT OF TERRORISM AND EFFECTIVE COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGIES

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the House Armed Services Committee held a full committee hearing on The Evolving Threat of Terrorism and Effective Counterterrorism Strategies. The hearing featured three witnesses, Professor Bruce Hoffman, Mr. Brian Jenkins, and Ambassador Michael Sheehan, all of whom are well-known counterterrorism subject matter experts.

There is no question that terrorism is a serious problem that requires holistic solutions, and there is no doubt that countering terrorism at home and abroad at times requires using hard power. This is a point that we can all agree. However, I am concerned that we have spent the overwhelming portion of our federal resources and national attention on the security dimensions of terrorism since 9/11 while largely ignoring the intangible elements, such as those requiring soft power solutions. This approach has led our government to adopt policies which only exacerbate the problem of terrorism rather than solve it.

President Trump's recent Executive Orders (EOs), in particular the Muslim ban and the virulent language being promulgated by senior officials, will only bolster the narrative which terrorist groups such as the Islamic State (IS) seek to spread, i.e. the West is at war with Islam. In his testimony in front of the House Committee on Homeland Security, Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly called the EO barring individuals from seven majority-Muslim countries from entering the United States a "temporary pause." While I will not question the sincerity of this remark, the vast majority of counter-terrorism experts, including Michael Leiter, the former Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, agree that at best the EO completely "misses the point." At worst, the EO is "stupid," and "counter-productive," according to Patrick Skinner, a former CIA counterterrorism case officer.

As Skinner and other counterterrorism experts note, we currently rely upon local partners in Syria, Libya, and Iraq with whom we work side by side to expel IS terrorists from Mosul and Al Bab and other areas. With the Immigration EO, we are effectively telling our partners now that we won't need them and will abandon those who have sacrificed greatly for our cause. This is false. We do need them. It is also worrying that this EO supports the hateful West vs. Muslim World narrative terrorists are trying to propagate. As Jessica Stern, a counterterrorism expert, recently reported, "jihadis are already celebrating Trump's executive order as a 'blessed ban.'" Let me repeat that: terrorists are celebrating Trump's Immigration Executive Order.

It does not stop there. Late last month Reuters reported that the administration is moving away from using the neutral term, Countering

Violent Extremism (or CVE), to Countering Islamic Extremism. Reuters further reported that the administration is focusing the work of a CVE Task Force on programs solely tackling radical Islamic groups, although the evidence clearly shows that since right-wing extremists have killed more people in the United States than Islamic Extremists. The world is following these developments, and terrorist leaders are using them to rally supporters and garner recruits.

In late January 2017, the New York Times provided evidence of a leaked draft of an EO that would have revived C.I.A. prisons, also known as black sites, where terrorism suspects were detained and tortured following the 9/11 attacks. The draft EO was reminiscent of the immediate years following 9/11, when torture was condoned by some of the highest levels of our government. Torture did not work back then and it does not work now. Simply put, torture makes us less safe. In early January 2017, a group of 176 retired flag officers from all branches of the United States military signed a letter to then President-elect Trump calling torture "unnecessary" and "counter-productive because it undermines our national security." A few days ago the New York Times reported that although the idea of black sites seemed to have been dropped, the Trump Administration was finalizing a new EO draft that would bring future IS detainees to the wartime prison at Guantanamo Bay.

In the years following the 9/11 attacks, Americans were forced to confront our policies of torture, black sites, the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, and the wartime prison at Guantanamo Bay Cuba. These policies not only left a stain on our conscience and America's moral standing, but they also led to the radicalization of countless of individuals. It is well known that Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, the leader of IS, spent significant time at American detention centers in Iraq, including Abu Ghraib and Camp Bucca. It was there that he and other future leaders of IS first met. Former prison commanders, analysts, and soldiers all reported that these prison sites "provided a unique setting for both prisoner radicalization and inmate collaboration—and was formative in the development of today's most potent jihadist force."

Mr. Speaker, it is plain to see the means this administration will use to counter terrorism will only lead to further radicalization, the birth of more terrorist groups, and increasingly strained relations with the Muslim world. I hope that we in Congress do everything we can to ensure that our counter terrorism policies live up to our values, and that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

RECOGNIZING MR. BILL MARKHAM

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Bill Markham on being inducted into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame. This honor is reserved for those who have made a significant contribution to the agricultural industry of Colorado and the United States.

Throughout his life, Mr. Markham has contributed to the agricultural industry. His dedication to educating the youth in Colorado about

the importance of agriculture inspired him to donate his time and resources to the Colorado Young Farmers Educational Association, serving as state president and national secretary. He was also a member of the Colorado Livestock Association and Colorado Corn Growers Association. Throughout the years, he has won various awards for his commitment to agriculture, and even appeared in a Coors television commercial.

Despite Mr. Markham's accomplishments within his community, he is most proud to hold the title farmer. Mr. Markham is the owner of M&M Farms, where he has spent countless days growing Rocky Mountain Barley for Coors Brewing Company.

On behalf of the 4th Congressional District of Colorado, I extend my best wishes to Mr. Bill Markham. His passion and dedication to the agricultural industry makes him more than worthy of this distinct recognition. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Mr. Bill Markham for his accomplishments.

HONORING OAKWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL AS FUTURE CITY FINALISTS

HON. BOB GIBBS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the students of Oakwood Middle School, finalists in the Future City competition.

Each year, more than 40,000 students from 1,350 schools across the country compete in the Future City competition, which challenges students to create futuristic cities and solve sustainability issues within the city. Thirty-four eighth-grade students from Oakwood Middle School in Canton, Ohio participated in this year's competition under the guidance of their teacher, Ms. Vanessa Board.

This year's competition tasked the students to create an efficient, eco-friendly city set 100 years in the future. These talented students used their knowledge in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math to create the city of Skotgeta, an Icelandic city powered by geothermal energy, which harnesses sustainable natural resources and utilizes technology to cure cancer. Their hard work earned them First Place at the regional competition and qualified them to compete in the national Future City competition.

The achievements of these students demonstrate the same ingenuity and determination of other Ohioans like Neil Armstrong, Thomas Edison, and the Wright Brothers. I am confident in the future of our nation when Oakwood Middle School's Future City team represents the next generation of American leadership.

Mr. Speaker, this accomplishment is a testament to the students and their teacher's dedication to academic excellence. I am proud of each of these individuals, and I wish them much success in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, on February 13, 2017, I missed four votes as a result of personal illness. Had I been present, I would have voted YES on H.R. 609, YES on H.R. 512, YES on H.R. 244, YES on H.R. 974.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER SERGEANT FIRST CLASS (SFC) WILLIAM C. SPILLERS

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Sergeant First Class (SFC) William C. Spillers who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on February 17, 2007, during Operation Iraqi Freedom III. SFC Spillers died of a non-combat related injury in Baghdad, Iraq.

SFC Spillers worked at the Joint Forces Headquarters in Jackson, MS. He was assigned to the 230th Finance Detachment, 15th Finance Battalion, 13th Finance Group, Jackson, MS. Twenty-one members of his unit were mobilized in May 2006. They arrived in Iraq in August 2006.

SFC Spillers, a Terry, MS native, was described by Major General Harold Cross as a model soldier who was always attentive to his duties, Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard. At the time of SFC Spillers's death, at least 47 soldiers or sailors with Mississippi ties had died in action since operations began in Iraq and Afghanistan.

SFC Spillers devoted his life as a full-time soldier in service to our nation. He is survived by his parents Robert E. Spillers and Sharon Johnson, his wife Kim, his daughter Hailey, and sons Daniel and Myles.

BOOSTING RATES OF AMERICAN VETERAN EMPLOYMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 13, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 974, "Boosting Rates of American Veteran Employment Act." "BRAVE Act" authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs to give preference to companies with high concentrations of veteran employees when awarding VA contracts.

I support this bipartisan bill because it provides an incentive to companies to actively hire veterans.

H.R. 974 will spur the hiring of veterans into coveted positions within large government contractors.

The BRAVE Act also gives the VA authority to debar contracting for at least five years of any company determined to have willfully and

intentionally misrepresented the veteran status of its employees.

One of the biggest problems facing our veterans right now is finding good jobs in civilian life, especially those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our veterans have received the best training in the world.

They have unique skills and experience that cannot be acquired anywhere but in the United States military.

They have what it takes to excel in the civilian workforce; they do not need charity, just opportunity.

With this bill, we urge private companies to hire highly-trained, highly-skilled veterans who know how to get the job done, whatever job it may be.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 974.

RECOGNIZING MR. BILL WEBSTER

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Bill Webster on being inducted into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame. This honor is reserved for those who have made a significant contribution to the agricultural industry of Colorado and the United States.

Mr. Webster has had a tremendous impact on agriculture in Colorado. He started Webster Land and Cattle Company at a young age and managed the company for over thirty years. After his retirement, Mr. Webster served in the Colorado State Legislature and as the Weld County Commissioner at Large. He has continuously been a leader in his community, serving on multiple boards and participating in various organizations. Today he is involved in the Greeley Rotary Club, T-Bone Club, First Congregational Church, and the American Legion.

In addition to being a leader in his community, Mr. Webster served his country for two years in the United States Army. After his many years of public service, Mr. Webster returned to Colorado State University to complete his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science. Mr. Bill Webster has set an exceptional example of leadership and public service, and it is a great honor to call him a dear friend and my father-in-law.

On behalf of the 4th Congressional District of Colorado, I extend my best wishes to Mr. Bill Webster. His passion and dedication to the agricultural industry makes him more than worthy of this distinct recognition. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Mr. Bill Webster for his accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding missed votes due to my attendance at the White House for the signing ceremony for H.J. Res. 41 on Tuesday, February 14,